

2 Special Information and Programs

The Secretary of State oversees many areas involving traffic safety issues, automobile and other vehicle registration, and licensing issues. This section provides information about several programs not directly related to motor vehicles, such as voter registration and organ donor programs.

Voter Registration Information

You must be registered to vote to participate in Michigan elections. Eligible residents may register at a Secretary of State branch office.

If you are at a branch office applying for, renewing, or updating information on your driver's license, you also will be provided with an opportunity to register to vote.

To register to vote you must be:

- A U.S. citizen.
- At least 18 years of age on or before election day.
- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you wish to register to vote.

In addition to Secretary of State branch offices, you may register by mail or at your local county, city, or township clerk's office. You must register at least 30 days before the election. If you move within your city or township, you must change the address on your voter registration. If you move to another city or township, you must register to vote in that jurisdiction.

If the address you provide on a voter registration application does not match the residential address on your driving record, your driving record will be updated to match your voter registration. If you are registering to vote at a clerk's office, a change-of-address sticker will be mailed to you for your driver's license.

The Secretary of State will enclose a voter registration application with your renewal notice if you are eligible to renew your driver's license by mail. To register, fill out the voter registration form and send it with your driver's license renewal form. Voter registration forms may also be printed from the Secretary of State Web site. If you are already registered and your address has not changed, there is no need to mail the voter registration form supplied with your driver's license renewal notice.

Organ Donor Program

The Secretary of State provides you with several convenient methods for designating organ donor wishes. The department has made it easy to become an organ donor with its online organ donor card. Organ donor cards may also be printed from the Web site and are available in branch offices.

The Michigan driver's license and state identification (ID) card have space on the back to write organ and tissue donor information.

If you have a driver's license or state ID card issued before spring 1998, you can make your organ donor wishes known by obtaining an organ donor sticker for the back of your license at a branch office.

The Michigan Organ and Tissue Donor Registry is a confidential, 24-hour-a-day, computerized database that documents your wishes regarding organ donation. As the organ donor registry is available to hospital staff around the clock, it remains the timeliest and most convenient means of indicating your wishes.

You may also indicate your wishes by establishing a patient advocate, or through a will, document of gift, driver's license and state identification card. However, these methods do not place your name on the organ donor registry and are not always accessible at the time of your death.

It is very important to discuss organ donation with your family. Keeping everyone informed will help avoid any confusion or delays and ensure that your wishes are carried out.

The Secretary of State is committed to promoting greater

organ donor awareness. Each year, more than 2,000 Michigan residents wait for an organ or tissue transplant.

For more information about organ donation, telephone toll-free:

Gift of Life Michigan

1-(800) 482-4881

National Kidney Foundation of Michigan

1-(800) 482-1455

American Liver Foundation

1-(800) GO-LIVER (465-4837)

State Identification Cards

A state identification (ID) card can be issued to any eligible resident, regardless of age. You may not have a state ID card and a Michigan driver's license unless your license has been restricted, suspended, or revoked. To obtain a state ID card, visit a Secretary of State branch office. Proof of identification will be required before a state ID card will be issued. Please refer to "Providing Proof of Identity" in Chapter 1 or contact a Secretary of State branch office or the Secretary of State Web site for more information about acceptable identification. All identification is subject to Secretary of State approval.

There is a fee for a state ID card, but the cards are issued free to residents who are blind, age 65 or older, or who have had their driving privileges terminated due to a mental or physical disability. Your state ID card expires four years from your last birthday and may be renewed by mail. Under Michigan law, a state ID card is as valid as a driver's license for identification purposes.